COUNTY OF MARIN

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Marinfo NOW

NEWS FOR MARINSHARES AND MARINTERNS

VOLUNTEER NOTES

Help Make History

To document the historic moment in which we are living, county historians in the library's California Room are seeking source materials on the COVID-19 pandemic.

Digital and analog materials are welcome, including photographs, ephemera (such as mailers, flyers, pamphlets, signs), and audio and visual materials that document the pandemic.

Please save the ephemera to pass along to archivists after the Civic Center branch re-opens.

Digital materials, such as photos and audio/video, require this accompanying metadata: who took the photo or shot the video; where it was taken; when it was taken; and additional identifying information. If you would like to contribute, please contact digital archivist **Carol Acquaviva** at cacquaviva@marincounty.org.

The California Room staff plans to present a collection of digital photos, videos, and stories later this year on the library's digital archive.

marinshares marinterns

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Former PBS Journalist Leads Tours

By Scott Harrop

PHOTO BY RENATA LIMA

Spencer Michels leading tour group

Spencer Michels loves guiding tours of the Marin Civic Center. "The reason I'm doing volunteer work and having so much fun with it is because there are so many cool stories!"

He is uniquely qualified for the role.

A third-generation San Francisco native and Princeton University graduate, Spencer studied journalism at Columbia, then worked at the Palo Alto Times, NBC, and KCRA Sacramento's San Francisco bureau. He then became correspondent and co-producer with the "PBS Newshour," based in KQED's San Francisco office.

To prepare as a docent he learned everything he could about the building's

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Intern Showcases Green Programs

By Tiyona Pariani

Throughout his senior year, **Kunal Lohtia** has interned twice a week with Clean Marin, a litter-reduction project of the Marin County Stormwater Pollution Prevention Program.

His responsibilities include development of the Clean Marin website and the Clean Marin newsletter. He enjoys showcasing what Clean Marin does to help businesses implement green practices, and he updates the website to highlight the new businesses that have joined the program. Kunal has also recruited other businesses, in person and by email, to join the program. (In-person recruiting stopped in March when the public health response to Covid-19 required most people to stay home.)

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Former PBS Journalist Leads Tours

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world-famous architect, Frank Lloyd Wright.

Armed with a folder of news clippings, Spencer describes to visitors how Wright intended the roof to be bright gold, not its current iconic blue. Wright also designed a bridge (never built) over San Francisco Bay, using a series of arches like those at the Civic Center, echoing Southern France's ancient Roman Pont du Gard. Spencer contrasts positive and critical reviews of Wright's architecture in The New Yorker and The New York Times.

This broad knowledge serves him well when he leads tours three to four times a month. The 90-minute walking tours begin at 10:30 a.m. on Wednesdays and Fridays in the cafeteria. *

"The people who come are intelligent and well-educated people who want to look at architecture."

The Frank Lloyd Wright docent team conducts over 250 tours of the Marin County Civic Center for over 4,000 people annually.

Spencer also shares Civic Center stories—the most dramatic dates to August 1970 and involves a courtroom kidnapping and fatal shootout in the parking lot.

Spencer's staff supervisor, **Libby Garrison** of the Department of Cultural Services, says Spencer is among the most enthusiastic docents. "His background in news media helps inform an insightful and thoughtful tour for all our visitors. I'm absolutely thrilled to welcome him to our esteemed docent team."

The docent team is in its 40th year and has been named the county's Volunteer Team of the Year for 2019-2020. The team, including Spencer, will be featured in an upcoming issue.

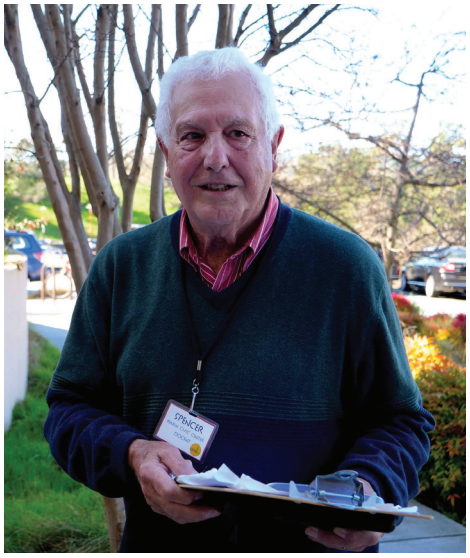

PHOTO BY RENATA LIMA

Spencer Michels

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*Civic Center tours are suspended temporarily during the county's pandemic response. For updates, visit the Civic Center Tours reservations page and scroll down to check the schedule.

Intern Showcases Green Programs

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PHOTO BY RENATA LIMA

Kunal Lohtia

He chose this internship because he wanted to make a difference in his environment and because it related to his interest in technology.

Department of Public Works Stormwater Program Administrator **Robert Carson**, Kunal's supervisor, has guided him through the program.

"Kunal has been instrumental in the rollout of the Clean Business Program by integrating businesses from existing municipal programs under the countywide effort," Robert said. "The public outreach, web, and social marketing skills he has demonstrated make Kunal an asset to any team."

After graduating from Terra Linda High School, Kunal will be attending the University of California at Davis remotely this fall. He plans to major in computer science or economics.

Throughout his time at Terra Linda High School, he has been a part of a program called Marin School of Environmental Leadership. It is a project-based, environmentally focused program that emphasizes development of leadership skills.

"The program mainly focuses on leadership development, public speaking, creative arts, technology, engineering, project management, environmental justice, and community service," says Kunal. "I have been able to take the skills and knowledge acquired from this program and apply them to real world situations, such as this internship."

Kunal was born in New Jersey and moved to San Rafael when he was 2 years old. His hobbies include making music with his friends. He has played tennis for nine years and is on Terra Linda's team.

"What I learned from Clean Marin is that it doesn't take one person to create environmental change," said Kunal. "Change can be accomplished through all of us working together to protect our planet and our home."

Curious about internships? Contact Student Internships Coordinator **Joy Fosssett** of the Marinterns program at JFossett@marincounty.org or 415-473-7447.

Ace Genealogy Team Brings Past to Life

By Shirley Trimble

The California Room at the Civic Center Library boasts an "ace volunteer genealogy team," according to Librarian **Laurie Thompson**. Laurie is supervisor of the Anne T. Kent California Room, an archive dedicated to collecting and preserving information on local, regional, and state history with an emphasis on Marin's history and culture.

"**Dave Williams** and **Cathy Gowdy** have been providing outstanding customer service for a combined 31 years to library patrons doing genealogic research," explained Laurie, who shares her enthusiasm for the team's dedication to service and genealogical expertise.

When Dave retired from his engineering career in 2010, his wife said, "No sitting around." An accomplished genealogist, Dave was matched by the county's volunteer office with the California Room program, a perfect fit for his talents. He has since been a fixture in the genealogy program all day each Thursday. In addition to helping people doing family research and authors doing historical research, he specializes in biographies of Marin County people, military history of Hamilton Air Force Base, and history of the Northwestern Pacific Railroad. "He maintains the California Room's ever-expanding biography and clipping files, and is frequently the first person to go through donations of materials such as letters, photographs, and other primary sources. Dave often helps the librarians with special projects," said Laurie.

Dave says the California Room is a good source of original data with its large collection of California and Marin history books, city directories, phone books, oral histories of long-time residents, and 30,000 surveyors' maps (available by appointment in Special Collections). "It has been such a pleasure to work with Cathy and Laurie all these years," he said.

PHOTO BY CAROL ACQUAVIVA

Cathy Gowdy and Dave Williams

For the past 14 years, Cathy Gowdy has been a dedicated California Room presence on Friday mornings. "She provides high-level assistance to patrons doing genealogical research, both by phone and in person. She is widely recognized for her genealogy skills and has created numerous guides, books, and finding aids on the subject," said Laurie. "We are truly honored to have her on our team. If you give Cathy a name, she will dig up the family tree and trace it back to the old country. She regularly researches, organizes, and traces family trees, and has created new resources for us."

Cathy started early researching her own family history as her grandmother, a Quaker, had written what she knew about the family. "I joined in the research when my mom got enthusiastic about the chase and the mystery. It was so much fun," said Cathy. At the California Room, she created databases for other people's research: she read cemetery records compiled in the '70s, catalogued St. Raphael's Parish old marriage records, indexed newspaper obituaries, and scoured census records. She's also created new resources including an extensive Kent Family genealogy and a two-volume compilation of Marin Civil War veterans. To back up the data she has created, Cathy keeps a separate copy of all her genealogy research.

Both Cathy and Dave also have volunteered for many years as genealogists at the Family History Center at the Marin County Genealogical Society at the LDS church. Cathy also leads the Genealogical Society's effort to locate the remains of military veterans among those buried at the former Marin County Poor Farm cemetery in Lucas Valley.

Readers who want information about volunteering are welcome to email MarinShares Coordinator of Volunteers **Anne Starr** at AStarr@marincounty.org.

Happy Anniversary!

We congratulate these volunteers who celebrate their anniversaries this month and thank them for their ongoing involvement.

27 YEARS
Art Marthinsen (San Rafael), Health Consultant, Community Development Agency

25 YEARS
Linda Davis (Sausalito), Consumer Mediator, District Attorney's Office

23 YEARS
Dan Healy (Woodacre), Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service/Auxiliary Communications Service (RACES/ACS) Volunteer, Sheriff's Office
Shirley Trimble (Mill Valley), Marinfo NOW Newsletter Writer, Human Resources

20 YEARS
Bill Mittendorf (San Francisco), Air Patrol Volunteer, Sheriff's Office
John Pope (Novato), Search & Rescue Volunteer, Sheriff's Office

17 YEARS
Richard Courier (Petaluma), Air Patrol Volunteer, Sheriff's Office

15 YEARS
David Mitchell (San Rafael), Air Patrol Volunteer, Sheriff's Office
Tom Zarraonandia (Novato), Steward, Marin County Parks

14 YEARS
Sue Baty (Point Reyes), Knitting Instructor, Point Reyes Library
Emily Cushman (San Rafael), Search & Rescue Volunteer, Sheriff's Office

12 YEARS
Larry Atkinson (San Carlos), Search & Rescue Volunteer, Sheriff's Office
Susan Bunker (San Rafael), Library Beyond Walls Liaison, Marin County Free Library

10 YEARS
Genny Duffin (Sonoma), **Erica Shafer** (San Anselmo), Senior Peer Counselors, Health & Human Services (HHS)
Scott McDaniel (San Rafael), Search & Rescue Volunteer, Sheriff's Office

9 YEARS
Rick Bartolacelli (San Rafael), California Room Docent, Civic Center Library
Robert Gehlen (San Rafael), **Rich Shelton** (Tiburon), Search & Rescue Volunteers, Sheriff's Office
Rich McGrath (San Rafael), Flag Raiser at Avenue of the Flags, Cultural Services

8 YEARS
Deborah Gregor (Novato), Event Aide, Human Resource
Terry Norton (San Anselmo), **Kathryn Thyret** (Mill Valley), Ombudsman Volunteers, HHS

7 YEARS
Bruce Bowser (Bolinas), Steward, Marin County Parks
Larken Bradley (San Rafael), Senior Peer Counselor, HHS
John Garcia (Dixon), Air Patrol Volunteer, Sheriff's Office

5 YEARS
Christine Camilleri (Novato), Mounted Patrol, Marin County Parks
Valerie Lels (Kentfield), Financial Abuse Specialist Team (FAST) Volunteer, HHS
Sarah Loughran (San Rafael), Search & Rescue Volunteer, Sheriff's Office
Nancy Oswald (San Anselmo), Administrative Aide, Veterans Services Office, HHS

4 YEARS
David Gannon (Corte Madera), **Timothy Mahoney** (Fairfax), **Marion Matthews** (Petaluma), Search & Rescue Volunteers, Sheriff's Office
Paul Minault (San Rafael), Steward, Marin County Parks
Mark Stoering, (Tomales), Tomales Station Volunteer Firefighter, Fire Department

2 YEARS
Chrisula Asimos (San Rafael), FAST Volunteer, HHS
Brian Beidelman (San Francisco), **Gideon Bernstein** (Mill Valley), **Arran Caddy** (San Francisco), **Tom Kennedy** (Mill Valley), **Calvin Schrader** (San Anselmo), **Tate Thompson** (Kentfield), Search & Rescue Volunteers, Sheriff's Office
June Bernstein (Mill Valley), **Cassidy Fragakis** (Larkspur), **Alexander Mormorunni** (Mill Valley)
Paul O'Driscoll (San Francisco), **Kasia Page** (San Anselmo), **Michael Shirado** (Corte Madera), Search & Rescue Youth Volunteers, Sheriff's Office
Nancy Carlisle (Novato), **Michael Fischer** (Mill Valley), **William Hitt** (St. Helena), **Christian Jordan** (Mill Valley), **Kami Kitchen** (San Francisco), **Drew Levy** (Sonoma), **Joe Lopardo** (San Francisco), **Sean O'Leary** (San Rafael), **Steven Virshup** (Novato), Fire Lookouts, Fire Department
Gary Robards (San Rafael), California Room Survey Archivist, Civic Center Library

1 YEAR
Jennifer Doores (Fairfax) Shelver, Fairfax Library
Brigitte Gras (Mill Valley), Library Beyond Walls Liaison, Marin County Free Library
Catherine Sanchez-Corea (Bolinas), Tutor, Point Reyes Library

Who's New & Welcome!

Lucy Aldridge (Benicia), Nutrition Wellness Program Intern, Health & Human Services Department (HHS)

S. Denise Bashline (Novato), Volunteer Paralegal/Clean Slate Program, Public Defender's Office

Mary Bramblet (Fairfax), Administrative Aide, Probation Department

Kevin Buchignani (Novato), Landscape Volunteer, Novato Library

Shanna Cronan (San Rafael), Communicable Disease Program Volunteer, HHS

Matt Ford (San Rafael), Veterans Office Administrative Support Volunteer, HHS

Carolyn Jones (San Rafael), Ombudsman Volunteer, HHS

John Lavelle (San Anselmo), Tour Docent, Cultural Services

Gail Lynn (Novato), Ombudsman Volunteer, HHS

Ailya Naqvi (Oakland), Volunteer Attorney, Public Defender's Office

Shweta Prasad (Elk Grove), Public Guardian Intern, HHS

Sydney Thompson (San Rafael), Literacy Tutor/Reading Buddies Intern, Marin City Library

Nuala Willis-Shore (Point Reyes Station), Teen Shelver, Point Reyes Library